



The HPD News

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A Message From Two of Your Assistant Chiefs

Professional Development

The Professional Development Command represents seven divisions that provide education, guidance, and training.

The Central Intake Office is a centralized unit where complaints involving employees are processed. Complaints may be directed either to the Internal Affairs Division for investigation or to the Alternative Dispute Resolution Unit for resolution through Mediation, Grievance, Women's Issues, or the Employee Representative Council.

The Civilian Employment Division is responsible for the recruitment, selection, evaluation, and hiring of civilians within the department.

The Community Services Division is responsible for Citizens on Patrol, Crime Stoppers, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), the Houston Police Academy Alumni Association, the Houston Police Explorers, and the Police Activities League.

The Personnel Division maintains personnel records, monitors extra employment, assists employees and their families in personal matters, and coordinates transfers and promotions.

The Psychological Services Division performs psychological evaluations of applicants for new positions, provides counseling, assists with training, and provides expert testimony for the Legal Services Unit.

The Recruiting Division solicits, processes, screens, and maintains records on applicants for classified positions.

The Training Division oversees training of police recruits and new civilian employees, and provides in-service training. It also manages the department's Physical Wellness Program, administers annual firearm certification qualification, conducts driver training, and provides defensive tactics instruction.



Assistant Chief N. D. Wong, Professional Development Command

Tactical Support

The Tactical Support Command has a citywide responsibility for delivering a diverse array of specialized police services.

The Tactical Support Command is responsible for police services at major incidents and special events, policing of the downtown Central Business District, traffic enforcement and accident investigations, and execution of municipal warrants.

The command also supports the K-9 Unit, mounted patrol, helicopters, bomb squad, and dive team.

Additionally, it provides a specialized response to unique or specific circumstances through the Special Weapons and Tactics Unit, Hostage Negotiations Team, and Special Response Group, and with crowd control, event management, and dignitary protection.

The Tactical Support Command also manages the Special Response Group, which is comprised of 789 specially trained officers who are activated for specific tactical purposes throughout the Houston Police Department.

These officers are trained in a variety of responsibilities including crowd and traffic control for major incidents and events, and preparing for the department's response to weapons of mass destruction.

The Tactical Support Command has approximately 780 well-trained officers and civilians assigned to the command who provide essential police services to the citizens of Houston.



Assistant Chief F. E. Yorek, Tactical Support Command

Chief's Column

As we approach the holiday season, I would like to take a moment to reflect upon some of the things that we can be thankful for at the Houston Police Department.

We can be thankful that we live and work in Houston where crime continues to be held at a minimum. I am especially thankful for the dedicated men and women of the Houston Police Department who strive to make our city a better place to live and work for everyone.

We can be thankful for the many citizens who work alongside us to make Houston a safer city for everyone. The Houston Citi-

zens' Police Academy Alumni Association, Ministers Against Crime, Youth Police Advisory Council, Positive Interaction Program, and the numerous Neighborhood Crime Watch programs throughout Houston are just a few examples of how citizens and police can work together to keep crime at a minimum.

We can be thankful of the leadership shown each day by Mayor Lee P. Brown and his dedication to public safety and support for the Houston Police Department. We should also give thanks for the leadership of the Houston Police Department Command Staff and the men and women working each day on the streets of Houston.

Although this is a difficult time for our country following the recent terrorist attacks, we should give thanks that we are still the strongest free country on Earth.

If you plan to travel to see family or friends during the holiday season, please do so with care and safety in mind.

I would like to wish each of you a very joyous holiday season and extend my 'thanks' for your hard work and dedication to the Houston Police Department and the citizens of Houston.



Navidad En El Barrio Brings Christmas Fun to Houston Kids

Navidad En El Barrio, or "Christmas in the Neighborhood," is one of the many community projects that show Houston police officers have their hearts in the right place.

In 1987, HPD Officer Israel Gómez (Navigation Storefront) and some fellow officers began the program to bring gifts to *barrio* children.

This year's *Navidad En EL Barrio* will be held at the Reliant Park Arena on Saturday, December 8. In

addition to the Christmas gifts for the children, there will be door prizes and bicycles for the winners of the essay contest. At least 2,000 children from 50 area schools will attend the Galleryfurniture.com Bowl Sports Fest. There will also be two "Snow Day" events this year where real snow and ice is trucked in for all children to play in at no charge.

The success of *Navidad En El*

Barrio in Houston has lead to its expansion in Laredo and San Antonio with the participation of those cities' police departments.

Volunteers are still needed for this year's *Navidad En El Barrio*. For more information, call Officer Israel Gómez at the Navigation Storefront at (713) 238-2282 or at (832) 689-4518. You may also visit their Web site at www.navidadenelbarrio.org.

Houston Gunners Prepare for 2002 Football Season

The Houston Gunners are preparing for the 2002 football season with tryouts for veterans and rookies during the month of November at Law Park (8100 Mykawa Road). Anyone trying out for the Houston Gunners must be a certified police officer, corrections officer, probation officer, federal officer, or firefighter.

The Houston Gunners will begin their eighth season with an overall record of 49 wins and eight losses. The Houston Gunners are members of the National Public Safety Football League which consists of 16 law enforcement and fire department teams nationwide.

The Houston Gunners is a non-profit organization that was founded

in October 1994, by Houston police officers to raise funds for charitable organizations such as the Assist the Officer Foundation, Greater Houston Pop Warner, The Houston Citizens' Police Academy Alumni Association, and the American Red Cross.

For more information, call Sergeant Robert Bell at 713-247-5825.

“Blue Santa” Delivers Christmas Cheer

Houston police officers will play Santa Claus, or in this case a “Blue Santa” for some of Houston’s underprivileged children this Christmas.

HPD’s “Blue Santa” program began in 1984. Today more than 1,300 officers participate in the program and about 3,000 children will receive gifts for Christmas this year.

“Sometimes officers will come across a situation such as a disturbance call or meet a child in a D.A.R.E. class or receive a referral from a church,” said Officer F.J. Pyland (Community Services Division – Southeast Patrol).

Officer Pyland said eighty percent of the toys are bought with money from payroll contributions with the remaining twenty percent coming from corporate sponsors. HPD employees who want to participate in the “Blue Santa” program can sign up through payroll deductions. Toys “R” Us recently donated \$2,500 to the “Blue Santa” program.

For more information about the “Blue Santa” program, call (713) 731-5000 or log on to www.bluesantahouston.org.



Captain Joe Lampignano (center) proudly displays a special “Eagle Award” he was presented by supervisors and officers at the North Patrol Station. The award was presented by officers of all shifts in the North Division. Among the inscribed words on the award, “Truly, you are an inspiration...like the majestic eagle.” With the captain are (from l to r) Lieutenants Harry Zamora, Wendell Newman, Keith Gordon, Carl Driskell, Anthony Kivela and Fred Guidry.

“Blankets of Love” Warm Houston’s Homeless

The Korean-American Community Association has begun its fundraising efforts to make the eighth annual “Blankets of Love” a success.

The campaign began in 1993 as an effort to aid organizations that help the homeless or underprivileged. Over the years, HPD has received and donated approximately 15,000 blankets to the Star of Hope, the Coalition for Homeless, Briston Center, Sociedad Mutualista Obrera Mexicana, Magnificat House, J.W. Peavy Center, Target Hunter, Gulf Coast Community Services, and St. Vincent De Paul Society.

Project coordinator Dr. Tim Dang (Community Outreach Division) said that the “Blankets of Love” project has allowed the department to build a close relationship with both the Korean-American Community and the homeless over the years.

La Comida Food Drive Prepares for 15th Year of Holiday Donations

HPD will hold its 15th annual La Comida Food Drive during the first two weekends in December at thirteen Houston area Fiesta food stores. Pepsi-Cola is also a corporate sponsor.

Last year \$28,000 was raised and 3,000 families received food for the holidays.

Members of the Houston Citizens’ Police Academy Alumni Association will volunteer at the distribution sites along with uniformed officers. “When an officer in uniform volunteers, the donations triple,” said Lieutenant Dennis Thornton (Community Services). “People trust the uniform.”

Volunteers are also needed to help pack food at the Pepsi-Cola warehouse (9300 La Porte Freeway) on Monday, December 10, 2001.

HPD employees can donate canned goods at the Community Services Division on the 22nd floor of 1200 Travis. If you would like to volunteer, call (713) 308-3220.



Grand Prix HPD Bike Challenge

Officers form a thin blue line as they jockey for position in the 2001 Texaco/Havoline Grand Prix HPD Bike Challenge held Saturday, October 6, on the streets of downtown Houston. Winning first place, Officer Robert Eason (Central Patrol) proved to be the fastest among the Houston Police Department's 50 male and 1 female bike officers who qualified for the race. The North Patrol Division captured the Chief's Trophy.

Stay Safe While Shopping This Holiday Season

During the upcoming holidays, our thoughts will be on festive times and celebrations. However, the holidays can be the time of the year when we are more vulnerable to a crime. Here are a few reminders to make your holidays safer.

When you are shopping:

- Shop with a friend. There is safety in numbers.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Carry only the credit cards you plan to use.
- If you carry a purse, do not wrap the straps around your arms or shoulders.
- Carry wallets in your front pockets.
- Carry your purchases in nondescript bags. Avoid 'high dollar' store shopping bags.
- Do not overburden yourself with too many packages.
- Have your car keys ready and in your hand before leaving the store.
- Place purchases in the trunk of your car.
- If you feel uncomfortable, ask a security officer to escort you to your car.

Criminals can take advantage of unsuspecting individuals during the holidays. Know your surroundings and do not become a victim of a crime.